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BOOKS FOR CHRISTMAS

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Detroit, Michigan

EDUCATORS have been much interested in "The University Afloat". While this plan of education is not new, this is probably the first time that it has been tried on so large a scale. In this connection, *David Goes Voyaging*, a little book published last year, is illuminating. It is the account of thirteen year old David Putnam's experiences on the *Areturus* expedition, written by David himself. The book caused quite a stir and became deservedly popular. To a teacher, reading between the lines, there is revealed the wisdom of a father in giving his boy a chance to have the sort of training to which Garfield referred in his famous statement about Mark Hopkins and a log. In this case it was a boat instead of a log and the teacher was the stimulating author-naturalist, William Beebe. Mr. Putnam must have been satisfied with the result of his experiment for he fitted out an expedition to Greenland last year and allowed David to accompany it. Again

the boy has written of his adventures. *David Goes to Greenland*, G. P. Putnam's Sons, will be on the market in time for Christmas. Judging from the last book it will be fine.

Way down in southwestern Colorado in Mesa Verde National Park there is another parent who believes in this same kind of training for a boy. Mr. Nusbaum is a



From Dr. Dolittle's Caravan.

By Hugh Lofting

Courtesy F. A. Stokes

famous archaeologist who is superintendent of the park. Deric, his son, has been taught to help in the excavations of the cliff-dwellings for which the park is famous, and he likes the work so much that he is perfectly sure he too is going to be an archaeologist when he grows up, just as David knows he is going to be a naturalist. He has written of his work, play, and adventures in *Deric in Mesa*

Verde, G. P. Putnam's Sons, a real boy's book. Because there is not the variety of scene that there was in David's travels it may not seem quite as interesting. It does lack a certain bubbling sparkle that

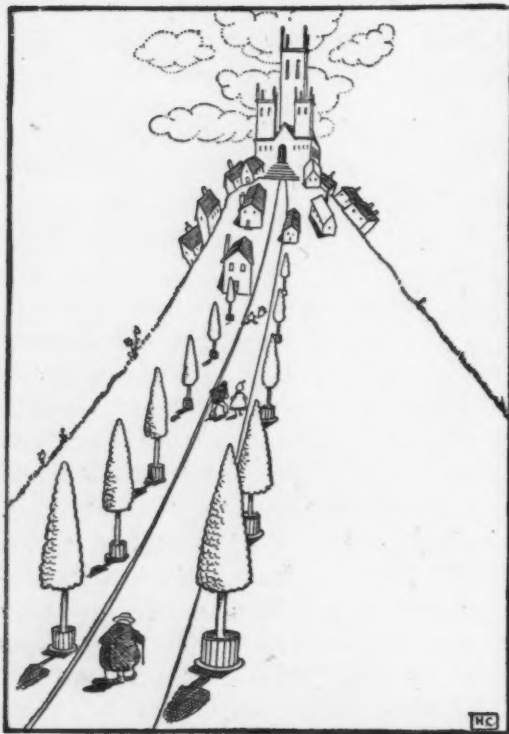
the earlier book had, but it is decidedly worth while. A grown-up realizes upon finishing these books that these two boys are studying much harder than the average school boy; they are easily learning difficult scientific terminology; their studies are fitting them for their life work; and they are living gloriously. We need similar books by girls.

Many years ago the teachers of a western city fought their way through a raging blizzard after school one day, to hear a man, unknown to them, but advertised as a famous story-teller. For once the press agent did not exaggerate. They sat thrilled for two hours while Seumas MacManus unfolded for them the beauties of the fairy tales of his native Ireland. Many of the stories he told that day were then unpublished. Some, including Billy Beg and His Bull and The Two Donals, have since become popular in the story-hour. To most of the teachers, who knew only the fairy

stories of Andersen and the Brothers Grimm, his tales were a revelation with their exaggeration, their complete child-like faith in the little people, and the lovely lilting charm of the language. So fascinated were these teachers by his winning brogue and the whimsical stories that they ventured out into the howling storm to snatch a bite to eat and then hurried back to hear him tell, for two hours that evening, more stories. Four hours of listening after a heavy day in school! Only a marvelous "schenachie" could hold an audience like that. Since then he has published many books, and a new volume of his is always an event. In the beautiful introduction to his recent book, *The Donegal Wonder Book*, Frederick A. Stokes & Co., he calls that collection of tales "just a handful of bloom from Donegal's teeming garden of thousand-year-old tales—tales of magic, mystery, witchery, and fairie—whose riotous profusion filled with fragrance all my childhood days."

There are a number of books about animals. Carveth Wells lived for six years in the Malay Peninsula and he has brought back from that "Topsy-Turvy" land all sorts of interesting stories which he has told throughout America to enthusiastic audiences of adults and children. In *The Jungle Man and His Animals*, Duffield & Co., he has written of the strange animals he met during his long residence there. This is a delectable book. He writes in the companionable, chummy style dear to children. His tales are very amusing, yet true. The illustrations in color by Tony Sarg are absurdly funny. It would be an ideal present for a convalescent child—better than a barrel of medicine. It might not be safe in case of broken arms or legs for the prancing of the monkeys on the cover is so spirited it might be contagious.

Helen Damrosch Tee-Van's *Red Howling Monkey*, Macmillan Company, is a very original book. Helen Tee-Van is one of the artists who accompanied the William Beebe Expedition to Kartabo, British Guiana. I



From Number Four Joy Street
Illustration by Hugh Chesterman

Courtesy D. Appleton

had always thought it was Beebe's genius that made the jungle so alluring that a reader of his books feels that he must take the first boat to the tropics. But there is the same fascination in this little book written for children. The jungle must cast a spell over those living close to it. Mrs. Tee-Van has written of Red Howling Monkey, a little Indian boy she knew. She tells of his family, their life, their beliefs and customs, and of exciting experiences that came to the lad. In addition to all this, she has written of the animals of the country. To illustrate the book the author has made many black and white sketches and a gorgeous colored frontispiece showing Red Howling Monkey by whose name the boy was called. It is astonishing to find such a wealth of material in so small a book. While absolutely different in many ways from *Tales from Silver Lands*, it has some points of similarity with Mr. Finger's book—such as the Indian words, the animals, plants, the Indians themselves. The author promises that someday she will write of the strange birds, bugs, caterpillars and fishes that she painted.

When *We Were Very Young* was the outstanding book for children last year. Mr. A. A. Milne has written a new book—this time prose as well as rhymes—*Winnie-the-Pooh*, E. P. Dutton & Co. Winnie is the much loved big Teddy bear of Christopher Robin. A copy of the book has not yet reached *The Review*, but critics, who have seen it, hail it with joy. They say that Ernest Shepard's drawings for it are irresistible.

Children never seem to tire of stories of live dolls or toy animals. In *The Adventures of Johnny T. Bear*, by Margaret J. McElroy, E. P. Dutton & Co., they may read of a rascal of a Teddy bear who became so bored with life on the shelf of a toy shop that he stole a toy train and rode away to strange adventures.

Margaret Williams Bianco once wrote a tale of *The Velveteen Rabbit*. It was, like



From *Winnie-the-Pooh*

By A. A. Milne

Courtesy E. P. Dutton

all her stories, a great favorite with little children. Since the first year of its publication in this country it has been out of print. Librarians and parents will be glad to know that George H. Doran Company have issued a re-print. The pictures by William Nicholson are beautiful.

Several unusually attractive books are for the youngest readers. One of the best is *Vallery Carrick's Folk-Tales*, Frederick A. Stokes Co. This gay red book contains a collection of the old favorites, with many black and white drawings.

Doubleday, Page & Co. publish most pleasing children's books. A new one, a diminutive scarlet book, is *An Alphabet for Boys and Girls* by Rachael Field. This is very different from the usual alphabet book, for on each page there is a picture of a child whose name begins with one of the letters of the alphabet. There is also a jingle describing the child.



From An Alphabet for Boys and Girls,
By Rachel Field

Courtesy Doubleday, Page

"Ann is the clever child who can
Make pancakes fry in a frying pan
Yet she's not proud as I should be
If I were such a cook as she."

Rachael Field has also written for little people *Eliza and the Elves*, Macmillan Co. Here are three stories, What Happened to Eliza, The Elfin Pup, and The Fairy Gentleman and his Dumpling Wife, all of them whimsical little tales. Then for good measure she has packed around them a number of wee rhymes about elfin people. The black and white pictures add to the fairy atmosphere of the book.

Another pleasing book of fairy tales and animal stories is *Under the Rowan Tree* by Abbie Farwell Brown, Houghton Mifflin Company. The illustrations are by Maurice Day.

Red seems to be popular for covers this season. *The Tailor and the Crow*, Frederick Warne & Co., is also bound in this glowing hue. This old rhyme has new illustrations by L. Leslie Brooke. They are excellent pictures in color and black and

white, full of English atmosphere, dramatic, and humorous.

Last year Charlie visited Maine and met his Coast Guards. Now in *Charlie and the Surprise House*, Macmillan Co., he helps his father fix up an abandoned house as a surprise for his mother when she returns from her vacation.

With *Taro and Hana in Japan* by Etsu Sugimoto and Nancy Austen, Frederick A. Stokes Co. describes the visit of a Japanese boy and girl who were born in America, to Japan. As a supplementary reader in geography it will be helpful, for it describes the every-day life of the Japanese.

Many children have enjoyed reading the story *Juan and Juanita* by Frances Courtenay Baylor published in 1886. It has long been out of print. Houghton Mifflin Company have just issued a fine edition, with big print and four lovely colored illustrations by Gustaf Tenggren. It should prove as popular with the children today as it was with their parents.

Another book of pioneer life is *Deadwood Gold*, World Book Company. This is a story of the Black Hills at the time of the gold rush. George W. Stokes, who lived the life described, told his experiences to Howard R. Driggs of New York University and the result is this interesting story of adventure and hardship.

If parents wish to give children's classics for Christmas presents it is well to look over Macmillan's Little Library. They have added to this a new edition of *The King of the Golden River*. The print is good and there are new pictures by Mary Lott Seaman.

The Macmillan Company has published a new edition of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. It is arranged by Jean Matthew. It is attractively illustrated by H. J. Ford with many black and white sketches and four color plates.

Children who have read *The Golden Porch* by William M. L. Hutchinson will be glad to know that the author has written another book, *Orpheus with His Lute*,

Longmans, Green & Co. These "stories of the world's springtime" are of Orpheus, Eurydice, Prometheus, Apollo, Pandora, and other heroes and heroines from Greek mythology. The tales are short; they are told in a simple manner; the language is poetic; the illustrations by Dugald Stewart Walker are, as usual, imaginative and decorative.

Peter-Pea, Frederick A. Stokes Co., is a fairy-story from Russia by N. G. Grishina. Its hero is a tiny fairy who grew from a pea. There is a quaint old-world charm in the little tale, and the pictures by the author in color and black and white add to the beauty of the book.

Charles Scribner's Sons have published a lovely new edition of that old time favorite, *Hans Brinker*. It is in their \$2.50 edition of illustrated classics and is uniform with *Treasure Island*, illustrated by Wyeth. The beautiful colored pictures are by George Wharton Edwards. They are the same as those in the 1915 Edition, only larger.

Some children prefer a collection of short stories to a book. To such is offered *Number Four Joy Street*, published by D. Appleton & Co. Many well-known English writers have contributed stories or poems. Walter de la Mare's story, *John Cobbler*, has the place of honor. It is sure to be a favorite with those who like highly imaginative, weird fairy tales.

A librarian said recently that she considered *The Children's Book*, edited by Horace E. Scudder, the best collection of stories and poems for children. It has been out of print for sometime. The price, five dollars, was prohibitive in many cases. Now Houghton Mifflin Company has published an edition for two dollars and a

half. It has the same format as the original edition. The publishers were wise to keep the old pictures for they seem to belong to the stories and children enjoy them as a change from the pictures that modern artists are making for their books. The gay jacket is ultra-modern.

Hugh Lofting has written another story of Dr. Dolittle's Circus Animals, *Dr. Dolittle's Caravan*. This time interest centers in a famous coloratura canary and the opera the animal-loving little doctor wrote for her. The Dr. Dolittle books have a wide audience, and a new volume is always enthusiastically received. The publishers are F. A. Stokes and Company.

A child will find all sorts of circus animals in *Davy Winkle in Circus Land* by Edwin Norwood, Little, Brown & Co. Davy goes through a tree stump into Circus Land, which is underground, beneath the circus lot. Here he has all kinds of strange experiences.

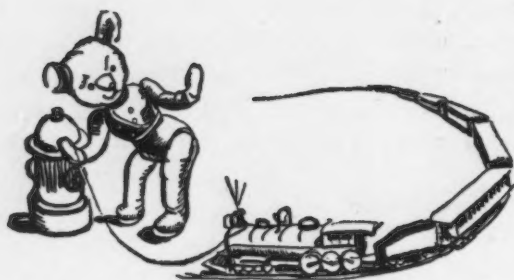
Emma Serl is the author of a courtesy reader, *Everyday Doings at Home*, Silver, Burdett & Co. This is a supplementary reader based upon the doings of a squirrel family. Miss Serl has an aim—to teach a child politeness. I wonder how well she'll succeed. Children will like the pictures by Harry E. Wood.

The child who is always asking of stories, "Are they

true?" will be delighted to know that Mr. Everett T. Tomlinson has hunted in old books long out of print, in newspapers, and in old letters for true stories of pioneers. He has told in *The Book of Pioneers*, D. Appleton & Co., just the sort of things that histories don't tell. There are tales of ghosts and witches, pioneer schools, trailers, pioneer boatmen, the "pig stealers" in the Mohawk Valley, children



From *The Jungle Man and His Animals*,
By Carveth Wells
Courtesy Duffield



From *The Adventures of Johnny T. Bear*,
By Margaret J. McElroy

Courtesy E. P. Dutton

captured by the Indians, and stories of famous men of the time. He gives a vivid picture of an interesting period in American history.

A LIST OF BOOKS IN THE ORDER MENTIONED

David Goes to Greenland, by David Binney Putnam. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Deric in Mesa Verde, by Deric Nusbaum. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

The Donegal Wonder Book, by Seumas MacManus. F. A. Stokes & Co.

The Jungle Man and His Animals, by Carveth Wells. Duffield & Co.

Red Howling Monkey, by Helen Damrosch Teevan. Macmillan Co.

Winnie—The—Pooh, by A. A. Milne. E. P. Dutton & Co.

The Adventures of Johnny T. Bear, by Margaret J. McElroy. E. P. Dutton & Co.

The Velveteen Rabbit, by Margery Williams Bianco. George H. Doran Co.

Doctor Dolittle's Caravan, by Hugh Lofting. F. A. Stokes & Co.

Davy Winkle in Circus Land, by Edward Norwood. Little, Brown & Co.

Everyday Doings at Home, by Emma Serl Silver, Burdette & Co.

Vallery Carrick's Picture Folk-Tales, by Vallery Carrick. F. A. Stokes & Co.

An Alphabet for Boys and Girls, by Rachael Field. Doubleday, Page & Co.

Eliza and the Elves, by Rachael Field. Macmillan Co.

Under the Rowan Tree, by Abbie Farwell Brown. Houghton Mifflin Co.

The Tailor and the Crow, drawings by L. Leslie Brooke. Frederick Marne & Co., Ltd.

Charlie and the Surprise House, by Helen Hill and Violet Maxwell. Macmillan Co.

With Taro and Hana in Japan, by Etsu Inagaki Sugimoto and Nancy Virginia Austin. F. A. Stokes & Co.

Juan and Juanita, by Frances Courtenay Baylor. Houghton Mifflin Co.

The Book of Pioneers, by Everett T. Tomlinson. D. Appleton & Co.

Deadwood Gold. By George W. Stokes and Howard R. Driggs. World Book Company.

The King of the Golden River, by John Ruskin. Macmillan Co.

Pilgrim's Progress, by John Bunyan. Macmillan Co.

Orpheus with His Lute, by W. M. L. Hutchinson. Longmans, Green & Co.

Peter—Pea, by N. G. Grishina. F. A. Stokes & Co.

Hans Brinker, by Mary Mapes Dodge. Charles Scribner.

Number Four Joy Street. D. Appleton & Co.

The Children's Book, by Horace E. Scudder. Houghton, Mifflin Co.

The Indian Canoe, by Russell D. Smith. The Century Co.

At Bow View, by Gladys Blake. D. Appleton & Co.

Treasure Hunters of Bob's Hill, by Charles P. Burton. Henry Holt & Co.

Topsy Turvey Tales, by Mildred Batchilder. Charles Scribner's Sons.



From Vallery Carrick's Folk Tales

Courtesy F. A. Stokes

CHILDREN'S POETRY

MIRIAM BLANTON HUBER
Institute of Educational Research
Teachers College, Columbia University

(Continued from October)

Editor's Note: In the first section of her article, which appeared in the October number of *The Review*, Mrs. Huber states the purpose of the investigation, and describes the methods by which it was carried out.

A doubt as to the methods of adults in selecting poetry that can function with meaning in the lives of children, led to the inception of the experiment here described. Approximately 100 poems were selected for each grade, from the first to the ninth. These poems were taken from thirty courses of study in English. They were published in experimental booklets, and distributed to schools in eleven cities, where records were kept of the pupils' reactions.

In the October number, a "black list" was published of the thirty-eight poems which were least liked by the children, together with the eighteen poems which were most popular with them.

Further lists follow:

MORE EXTENDED lists of poems high in interest in each grade follow in the order of their rank:

POEMS OF HIGHEST RANKS BY GRADES

Grade I

Poem	Author
1. The Woodpecker	Elizabeth M. Roberts
2. Only One Mother	George Cooper
3. A Visit from St. Nicholas	Clement C. Moore
4. I Like Little Pussy	Jane Taylor
5. Frogs at School	George Cooper
6. Jack-in-the-Pulpit	Rupert S. Holland
7. The Rabbit	Edith King
8. A Farmer Went Riding	Unknown

Poem	Author
9. The Child and the Fairies	Unknown
10. Three Jovial Huntsmen	Unknown

Grade II

1. The Raggedy Man	James Whitecomb Riley
2. Kentucky Babe	Richard Henry Buck
3. Our Flag	Lydia A. C. Ward
4. Hiawatha's Childhood	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
5. Lullaby	Paul Lawrence Dunbar
6. Cradle Hymn	Martin Luther
7. The Sugar Plum Tree	Eugene Field
8. The Star Spangled Banner	Francis Scott Key
9. The Owl and the Pussy-Cat	Edward Lear
10. When the Sleepy Man Comes	Charles C. D. Roberts

Grade III

1. Change About	Unknown
2. A Long Time Ago	Elizabeth Prentiss
3. A Boy's Mother	James Whitecomb Riley
4. America	Samuel Francis Smith
5. Raggle Taggle Gypsies	Unknown
6. Robin Hood and the Ranger	Unknown
7. King Bruce and the Spider	Eliza Cook
8. Which Loves Best	Joy Allison
9. The Flag Goes By	Henry H. Bennett
10. The Cow	Robert Louis Stevenson

Grade IV

1. Barbara Frietchie	John Greenleaf Whittier
2. Mr. Nobody	Unknown
3. O Captain! My Captain!	Walt Whitman
5. America the Beautiful	Katherine Lee Bates
5. A Strange Wild Song	Lewis Carroll
6. The Table and the Chair	Edward Lear
7. The Height of the Ridiculous	Oliver Wendell Holmes
8. The Runaways	Leroy Jackson
9. Book Houses	Annie Fellows Johnston
10. Evening at the Farm	John Townsend Trowbridge

Grade V

1. Little Orphant Annie	James Whitecomb Riley
2. The Leak in the Dike	Phoebe Cary
3. Robin Hood and Little John	Unknown

Poem	Author
4. Paul Revere's Ride	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
5. Nathan Hale.....	Francis Miles Finch
6. Casabianca.....	Felicia Dorothea Hemans
7. Knee-Deep in June..	James Whitecomb Riley
8. John Gilpin's Ride.....	William Cowper
9. The Bells.....	Edgar Allan Poe
10. In Flanders Fields.....	John McCrae

Grade VI

1. Somebody's Mother	Unknown
2. Out to Old Aunt Mary's	James Whitecomb Riley
3. A Nautical Ballad..	Charles Edward Carryl
4. The House with Nobody in It..	Joyce Kilmer
5. The Wreck of the Hesperus	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
6. The Yarn of the Nancy Bell	William S. Gilbert
7. The Village Blacksmith	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
8. Lochinvar.....	Sir Walter Scott
9. The Duel.....	Eugene Field
10. Beth Gelert.....	William Robert Spencer

Grade VII

1. Darius Green and His Flying Machine	John Townsend Trowbridge
2. The Leap of Roushan Beg	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
3. The Children's Hour	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
4. Plantation Memories.....	Irwin Russell
5. King John and the Abbot.....	Unknown
6. Annabel Lee.....	Edgar Allan Poe
7. The House by the Side of the Road	Sam Walter Foss
8. Horatius.....	Thomas Babington Macaulay
9. The Old Oaken Bucket..	Samuel Woodworth
10. The Charge of the Light Brigade	Alfred Tennyson

Grade VIII

1. In School Days....	John Greenleaf Whittier
2. The Highwayman.....	Alfred Noyes
3. A Nautical Extravagance....	Wallace Irwin
4. The Owl Critic.....	James Thomas Fields
5. The Deacon's Masterpiece	Oliver Wendell Holmes
6. Gunga Din.....	Rudyard Kipling
7. The Glove and the Lions.....	Leigh Hunt
8. Little Griffen of Tennessee	Francis O. Tichnor
9. Her Letter.....	Bret Harte
10. The Incheape Rock.....	Robert Southey

Poem	Author
Grade IX	
1. If—	Rudyard Kipling
2. Barefoot Boy	John Greenleaf Whittier
3. Love of Country.....	Sir Walter Scott
4. Home Thoughts from Europe	Henry Van Dyke
5. The Ballad of East and West	Rudyard Kipling
6. Sheridan's Ride....	Thomas Buchanan Read
7. The Vision of Sir Launfal	James Russell Lowell
8. To a Waterfowl....	William Cullen Bryant
9. The Torch of Life.....	Henry Newbolt
10. The Thinker.....	Berton Braley
11. Tam O'Shanter.....	Robert Burns
12. King Robert of Sicily	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

AS A GUIDE for selecting further reading material for children it would be extremely convenient if we could point to an outstanding element in each of these poems that has recommended it so highly to children, but it is not possible to do so. On the other hand, each of these poems abounds in a variety of elements of interest. In "The Raggedy Man" alone we might point to the following: animals, play, outdoor activities, fairies and magic, humor, surprise, life career, kindness, and a vivid lovable character in a home situation. In addition, it is written in dialect. Five of the eighteen poems best liked by children are written in dialect, genuine American dialects, native to three different sections of our country. Evidently children are not restrained by the fear that their use of language or literary taste will be harmed by the influence of dialect, but feel free to take enjoyment in its human quality and homely essence.

In reading the poems arranged according to children's choices in the different grades it seems possible to detect an evolution of taste in theme, and there appears to be a certain unity of interest in a grade. But pronounced trends of interest at different levels of growth are not borne out by these findings; on the contrary, children appear at all stages to have a variety of in-

terests. On the whole the majority of poems preferred in each grade contain action, plot, and humor.

The practice of assigning a poet for study in a single grade on the assumption that all that writer's verse will be suitable for the same stage of maturity is not substantiated by these findings. It is interesting to note that while Riley is the outstanding poet in children's interest, and Longfellow second, nevertheless there are individual poems by both poets that children will not tolerate, and the grades in which their poems are liked range from the primary to the junior high school.

In the following list are shown the poems from Riley and from Longfellow used in the experiment together with their placement in the experimental material and their final placement. It must be remembered that in experimentation, each group of poems was used in five different grades, and those poems appearing in more than one grade list had a still wider range of use.

CHANGES IN GRADE PLACEMENT

	Grade Placement in Present Practice	Grade Placement in Children's Interest
Riley, James Whitecomb		
A Boy's Mother	4	3
Little Orphant Annie.....	3	5
Out to Old Aunt Mary's.....	5	6
The Circus Day Parade.....	4, 5	4
The Raggedy Man	2, 3	2
Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth		
A Psalm of Life.....	6, 9	8
Christmas Bells	5, 6	3
Excelsior	5	7
Hiawatha's Childhood	1, 2, 3	2
Hiawatha's Fasting	4	4
Hiawatha's Friends	4	5
Hiawatha's Fishing	4	5
Hiawatha's Sailing	3, 4	5
Hymn to the Night	6	7
King Robert of Sicily.....	9	9
Paul Revere's Ride.....	4, 5, 6, 7, 8	5
Picture Writing	5	5

Rain in Summer.....	5, 6	8
The Arrow and the Song....	4, 5, 7	3
The Arsenal at Springfield....	8	6
The Bell of Atri.....	6	7
The Builders	5, 6, 7	7
The Building of the Ship.....	8, 9	8
The Children's Hour	3, 4, 5	7
The Day is Done.....	5, 6	7
The Leap of Roushan Beg....	7	7
The Old Clock on the Stairs..	5	6
The Skeleton in Armor.....	6, 7	7
The Three Kings	6	5
The Village Blacksmith..	3, 4, 5, 6	6
The Windmill	4	3
The Wreck of the Hesperus..	4, 5, 6	6

SEVERAL POEMS, such as "The Raggedy Man," "The Leak in the Dike," and "Darius Green and His Flying Machine," have a high interest in four or five grades and could probably be used with success in any one of them. But out of the 573 poems used in the experiment, only 59, or 10.3% of the entire list, rank among the upper 50 poems of three or more grades. It appears that outside of this limited body of material of universal appeal, children's tastes in the different grades become sharply differentiated and a poem's chance of success is more secure in a certain grade than in any other. If the findings of this experiment are accepted they point with convincingness to the importance of proper grade placement in the use of poetry.

While it might seem that, when judgments of experts and the traditional placement of poems are considered, the grade location of poems might be fairly accurately determined, nevertheless, when the 50,000 pupils involved in this experiment were given an opportunity to come in contact with a wide range of poems scattered over several grades, and allowed to indicate the ones that interested them most, we find that present practice is only 39% right. The changes involve on the whole, about as many poems being raised to higher grades as being reduced to lower ones, and the errors in judgment are as

(Continued on Page 299)

LANGUAGE VERSUS SILENT READING

IDA HUGLIN

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SILENT READING is an impressional process. Language is an expressional process whether it be oral composition, written composition, or oral reading. These two processes are different in purpose and different in operation. The former has for its purpose getting experience; the latter has for its purpose passing that experience on. The former is a process by which the impressions received through the eye are directly interpreted in the mind; the latter is a process by which interpretations, whether they have been made from the printed page or by observation or by some other means, are expressed by the use of the vocal organs. Hence, the processes are almost opposites. One is preliminary to the other. They may easily be correlated, but they should never be confused. The thoughtful, efficient teacher understands not only the difference, but also the importance; therefore he does not stress the one at the expense of the other.

Some extremely enthusiastic propagators of silent reading often do not have the language point of view. They do not fully appreciate language values. That is, they do not consider the fact that in order to make language knowledge function it must be applied to speech, both oral and written, at all times.

The time spent by teachers in giving children language training is wasted if that training does not function in their everyday lives. The teacher's biggest language problem invariably is, "How shall I make the children apply what they know about correct speech?" Should not all educators, therefore, show teachers how to encourage their children to use the English language at all times to the best advantage?

In a final broad analysis, there are only two learning processes within a school room: reading and language—impression and expression. What children learn by observation and by listening to the teacher are small exceptions. Reading is the one big way of getting impressions; the rest is expression in which the written and spoken word is the chief factor. Who shall judge which process has the greater value? It is clear to all that in this age anyone who cannot read with some degree of facility is greatly handicapped. For him remains only meagre ways of getting the experiences which he needs to make him an efficient citizen. Likewise is he handicapped, socially and otherwise, who cannot express himself adequately. The time will come when even a greater social stigma than is felt today will be fastened to all who abuse the English language. As certainly as there is progress (and the optimism that we are progressing prevails) so certainly will standards in English rise even among the American people who exercise the same liberties in speech as they do in all other matters.

We do our children a great wrong by not putting forth every effort to help them form correct speech habits. Language habits as well as other habits are most easily formed and fixed while the automatic powers are at the apex. After the adolescent years have passed much may be learned about correct and effective speech but such knowledge will function always more or less consciously. It is a waste of time and a waste of energy for us to allow any mental process to function consciously that should function automatically. The adult human mind should be

free to meet new problems and such matters as never can be habituated. Hence, too great a stress can scarcely be placed on making correct and clear speech habitual.

The specific problem of this brief discussion concerns the relative values of silent reading and language. I shall consider only one difficulty which arises in one particular procedure in silent reading. It arises because all value except those of speed and comprehension in reading are out of consideration! The teacher tells the children to read a certain selection and to write the answers to a series of questions or directions based upon that selection. The time is limited definitely to ten or fifteen or twenty minutes, as the case may be. Then the papers are collected and checked on speed and comprehension. Almost without exception the answers are written in slovenly fashion. The penmanship is poor and the English is no true English in any respect. The reason is that the children have hurried in order to get the required speed for the required work to be done in a required period of time. They have been told to hurry, and to write their answers in as few words as possible regardless of all written form and of sentence structure. There must be speed. The teachers have been told to give the children such directions by educators who are, without a doubt extreme specialists in silent reading. That is, they forget that there are other needs in education besides speed and comprehension in reading.

Teachers have said to me, "What shall we do about this? You have told these children to write their answers in complete statements. At such and such a meeting we were told to ask the children to write their answers as briefly as possible regardless of form, because they must acquire speed in reading."

What shall we do about this? We want the children to read with speed. The more speedily and yet comprehendingly they

read, the better. But surely there are ways of securing speed in getting thought from the printed page without sacrificing training in ability to speak and to write in good form, whether that form be words, phrases, or sentences.

It is impossible for children or for adults to acquire sentence sense without thinking and speaking and writing sentences. The details of sentence structure need not be understood until the time comes when the pupils should invariably help themselves. Then a criterion will be necessary. But constant practice in sentence sense is essential to the acquisition of clear expression.

Children need not always be required to answer in sentences either orally or in writing. That is not necessary because all answers do not require statements in order to make meanings clear. In such instances words or phrases may suffice, but only if no grammatical form and no principle of clear expression is violated. Groups of words, often unrelated and not understandable, should never be accepted as answers.

It is a true saying that all lessons are language lessons, and all trainers of children should bear this in mind. Great good will be done in language training by asking children to respond to all questions and to all directions in good statements, except that in some instances, especially in oral work, the procedure becomes monotonous and inexpedient. No harm can be done by requiring good speech forms in replying to the questions which accompany the silent process, whether speed or comprehension or both is stressed. The actual process of reading ceases the moment the last phrase in the selection has been transmitted to the child's mind. When he begins to write his answers, expression begins and with that he should be concerned. There may be (and should be) an intermediary process of recall, which tests the child's ability to comprehend what he has read and helps him

(Continued on Page 303)

THE READING INTERESTS OF BOYS

*A Committee Report**

DANYLU BELSER, Chairman

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EDITOR'S NOTE: The bibliography upon which this report is based does not include several recent studies in children's reading. These are: The Winnetka Book List, Terman and Lima's Children's Reading, Mrs. Huber's Children's Poetry, and the latest edition of Dr. Arthur M. Jordan's Reading Interests of Children. The report, however, does give a valuable survey of studies listed.

It will be interesting to receive from the committee at some date in the future, a supplementary report, discussing further findings of recent investigators.

IN GATHERING material for this report the committee has chosen five lines of procedure: 1. The investigation of available literature upon the subject; 2. The visiting of six libraries where conferences were held with librarians and surveys of reading materials and personal observations of children's readings were made; 3. The sending out of a questionnaire, answers to which were received from 112 boys and 125 girls enrolled in grades four to twelve inclusive; 4. A survey of the reading interests of German, French and Italian children. (The committee was fortunate in having a member who had first hand information on this topic.) 5. An inquiry into the influence of illustration upon reading interest.

I. The earliest published report upon children's reading interests appeared in the N. E. A. proceedings of 1897. This report was the result of an investigation made by Dr. James E. Russell and Royal Bullock in which they used the questionnaire method and based conclusions upon the answers of 1500 children from third grade through high school. Since then,

other investigators have, through questionnaires, observation and experiment, questioning adults, reading club projects, and surveys of withdrawal of books from libraries, made valuable contributions.

It is interesting to note that regardless of method employed, there has been a high degree of correlation between the conclusions reached by the various investigators. The conclusions which this committee has selected as being the most valuable are:

1. That up to eight or nine years age there is very little difference in the reading interests of boys and girls. Up to this time, both are primarily interested in juvenile fiction, fanciful, imaginative literature and that's-why stories as means of satisfying the cravings for experience.

2. The greatest divergence of reading interests of boys and girls comes between ten and thirteen years of age, reaching the highest point between twelve and thirteen. The chief causes of this divergence lies in the fact that the fighting and rivalry instincts are stronger in boys while the maternal instinct is developing in girls of this age.

3. Boys have little or no interest in strictly juvenile fiction after twelve.

4. The major interests of boys from ten to thirteen are in four general types of fiction: books concerned with: (1) war and scouting; (2) schools and sports; (3) boy scouts; (4) strenuous adventure. This is the age when boys are more thrilled by manifestations of physical bravery than by mental and moral courage. Pioneer tales, history stories, national epics, Robin Hood, Boy Scout stories are good for this period. Adventure holds the highest place and con-

* The members of the committee were: Danylu Belser, Chairman, Miss Hennessy, Miss Santy, and Mr. Lee.

tinues to do so up to about sixteen. Favorite authors are Altshelder, Barbour, Burton, Clemons, Heyliger, and Henty. Among the most popular books are: "Guns of Bull Run," "Scouts of the Valley," "Lone Star," "With Lee in Virginia," "On the Plains with Custer," "By Pike and Dyke," "With Wolfe in Canada," "The Half Back," "Left Tackle Thayer," "Weatherby's Inning," "Hitting the Line."

5. The maximum amount of reading in every instance is done between the sixth and eighth grades, the average being in the seventh grade at about fourteen years of age. At this period ninety-five per cent of the boys prefer adventure while seventy-five per cent of the girls prefer love stories, stories about great women, about clothes. For boys adventure, war, travel and exploration, stories about great men, hold interest in the order named. Interest in biography and history is confined to those authors who can write in the form of an exciting story.

6. In non-fiction, boys' interests center around "what-and-how-to-do" books, the Boy Scout Manual being by far the most popular of this group. Books on aeroplanes, submarines, kites, engines, puzzles and magic, are at certain seasons very much sought after. The medium age for non-fiction is about twelve years. However, it is only a rare case when one finds any steady interest at this age.

7. The sex instinct is the directive force in the choice of literature through the "teens." Imagination is largely guided by the books read at this period. Wholesome romance, love stories, adventure, stories of construction, and poetry, selected from the standpoint of adolescent need, should be provided.

8. Adult fiction, science and adventure rank highest with the "teen" age boys, while the girls are interested in adult fiction and stories of home life.

9. Boys choose as ideals historical and public characters.

10. More boys like poetry at fifteen than at any other age.

11. Nearly all boys experience a "reading craze" at some time in the adolescent period and will read almost anything they can get their hands on unless wisely guided along channels that challenge their interests. The chief satisfiers for boys as deduced from books most frequently chosen are:

Physical strength and aptitude.

Self control, particularly in critical situations.

Independence based on actuality.

Making a team at the expense of an unjust rival.

Saving a person's life.

Gaining mastery in physical combat over a despicable opponent.

Being honest, straightforward, open, trustworthy.

Winning admiration, even from an enemy.

12. Boys read magazines much more than girls and are more interested in current events. The most popular magazines are *St. Nicholas*, *Popular Mechanics*, *Scientific American*, *Boy's Life*, and *Youth's Companion*. *St. Nicholas* is read for its stories.

13. Reading interests are influenced by environmental conditions and racial characteristics. Dr. Dunn in her dissertation brings out the point that several interests which apparently rank low in child life might not do so if environmental conditions were different and if suitable books were provided. For instance—travel and biography.

II. Conferences with librarians and personal observation substantiate the conclusions of writers. Additional points of interest are:

1. Boys exercise more independence than girls in choosing books. They care less for the recommendations of others. They do more browsing in the library as a basis of selection.

2. Boys have more decided preferences than girls.

3. The poetry most enjoyed by boys is that of Kipling, Longfellow, and Tennyson.

4. Boys use the library for reference much more than we commonly think they do.

5. Those children who habitually draw upon the library for reading matter exercise better choice than desultory readers.

6. Girls read adult fiction earlier than boys but boys read more standard fiction than girls.

7. Reading interests vary in terms of environment, race, and season.

8. Practically no vicious books are read by boys who have sources for more desirable types.

III. While it has been impossible in so short a while to work out with mathematical precision the correlation between the results obtained from the questionnaire sent out and those obtained by experts from numbers sufficiently large to form conclusions, yet a crude comparison shows interesting similarities.

1. Boys practically never read girls' books but boys' books are sometimes read by girls.

2. Girls read adult fiction earlier than boys.

3. Books on adventure stand highest in both elementary and high schools. King Arthur stories, Robin Hood, Robinson Crusoe, The Tarzan Books, The Call of the Wild, are prominent in grades four to six, while books by Jack London, Cooper, Zane Gray, Barbour, Dickens, Dumas, Scott, Jules Verne, and Curwood show the continued interest in the high school. Girls in grades four to six voted highest for "The Bobsy Twins," "The Call of the Wild," "Little Women," "The Curley Tops," "Little Lord Fauntelroy," "King Arthur," "Betty in Canada." In grades seven to twelve, Louisa Alcott, Myrtle Reed, Dickens, Blackmore, and Augusta Evans Wilson appeared to be favorites. Boys in high school mention books on civil engineering and chemistry which are not paralleled in the girls' lists. Girls mention

poetry like "The Lady of the Lake" and "The Vision of Sir Launfal" while boys do not.

4. Boys give more definite answers to the question, "Why did you take the book?" than girls.

Because it was about fighting.

I took it for recreation and because it was full of fighting.

Because it tells the adventure of a boy; also because of a good description.

On my own.

To make a book report.

Because I wanted to know how they lived in other countries: were the boys' answers, while the girls more often said:

Because it was a good book.

Because I liked it.

Because it was exciting.

IV. The interests of European boys:

The European children do not do so much outside reading as they do in this country. The source of material in Europe is the teacher.

From the third grade up, there is an ever increasing amount of attention to the history of literature. Before a boy finishes high school in Europe he has made acquaintance of all the classics and the principal modern writers of both prose and poetry. He has read most known works and has committed to memory several thousand lines of their choicest expressions; and has some intelligent notion of the style and characteristics of many of them, and in the main he has acquired an appreciation of and a love for good literature. The program of literature is consistently and progressively arranged, and as a whole, more is required from a high school graduate than in America—at least along this line.

In France and Italy, there is much oral reading in class; it is among the most important subjects. Every child is willing to try his skill. Pupils read as if they were putting all their intelligence and their best spirits into the task. Their naivete seems to prevent them from ever

suspecting that anybody might laugh at their enthusiasm or their fidelity in expressing sentiment.

Often teachers read short stories to them. Sometimes these are very dramatic, and the little boys live in ever increasing emotions while the teacher reads, and they become acquainted with the tremendously dramatic lives of their grandfathers. Such readings influence a pupil's entire mental experience.

Reading in leisure time is considered more a luxury in Europe than in America.

Classic plays supplement the school, and are often played at the theatres at exceedingly reduced prices so that students may attend. Students generally go to the theatre at the Thursday matinee (Thursday being their day of vacation instead of Saturday) and between the acts they read from the opera or play.

In the American stories for boys, the hero is usually an athlete, while in the French and Italian books the hero is a kind-hearted boy who makes many sacrifices to help friends or other people less talented or fortunate than he. Often this hero is a national hero.

In the European fiction for school boys there is more description of school life, and of the relation between the boys and teacher, and boys and parents. There is less action than in American stories but there is more study of character.

Interest in engineering, railways, mining, and travel is common to American and to European boys. In the American books treating of science, for boys, there is a tendency to have a hero who gives the information, while in the European scientific books, it is not in story form but more nearly purely scientific.

Many of the books for young boys in Italy are diaries of the lives of marionettes while in America the marionette as a literary subject is not developed.

European boys have not so many books or magazines as American boys and not

nearly so many comic supplements. The outdoor life is not so much developed as in America and the boys do not have so many good scout books.

There is a spontaneous interest in legend, tradition, and mythology in European countries. European boys read adult books sooner than American boys because there is very little juvenile literature in Europe.

The reading of European children is decidedly more directed than is that of American children.

V. The influence of illustrations upon reading interest:

Since the child has taken his proper place in the general educational scheme, every avenue of approach to his interests has received consideration. It has been found that attractive pictures challenge the interest of children and are important factors in awakening and developing love for reading. Because of this, artists have accommodated their talent to the child's well known taste for the simple and direct. Researchers in this field agree that the characteristics which most appeal to child interest are: vivid color, little perspective, group ideas, action, and expression of action shown on faces.

Caldecott, Walter Crane, Greenaway have each tried to surpass the other in appealing to love of color, dramatic action and as little perspective as possible. These three artists have illustrated a section of "Pandora opening the box" as follows:

1. Walter Crane—A young maiden with her hands clasped opens a fanciful carved box from which issue waves in curled-like shapes into space. Near it with hands clasped upon his face, covering his eyes as if overcome by the sight of the waves, stands Epimetheus. So standing he shows fear, agony, pain.

2. Arthur Rackham—A child is kneeling beside a box. From the opening box are issuing strange animal shapes. The flaxen-haired child gazes at them in a state of

wonder. The lines of her body show tension but no fear.

3. N. C. Wyeth—There is a maiden seated at one side of a plain, dark box with her hands upon the lid. Back of her is the scene of a beautiful landscape. There is nothing of fear. Rather one gets the impression that she is weighing and considering before she acts. There is no picture showing the effect of having opened the box.

Mead Schaeffer, Maxfield Parrish, N. C. Wyeth, Frank Schoonover, Worth Brehns and George McDonald are popular illustrators of boys' books.

It seems to be a rather general opinion that boys care less than girls for illustration.

VI. Recommendation:

Since we believe the reading interests of children to be one of the most important factors in education, it is essential that we study the life of the child so as to cultivate his natural, wholesome tendencies, in this as well as other lines.

(Mr. Lee of our committee brought to our attention a fact that we feel should be passed on to those of you who might like to make further investigations, or whose responsibility includes the selection of books for children. He pointed out the fact that there are three centers in the United States

that are doing valuable work in studying children's interests as a basis for the selection of suitable books. These centers are the Cleveland Library, the Pittsburgh Library, and the Children's Library of Brooklyn. Miss Clara W. Hunt who edits "The Book Shelf for Boys and Girls" is the Superintendent of the Children's Department of the Brooklyn Library.)

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THE NEWSPAPER IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

GENEVIEVE ALBERTSON

State Normal College, Dillon, Montana

HOW TO MAKE BOYS and girls feel that there is a real purpose in oral and written composition is perhaps one of the most frequent problems confronting the teacher of English, either in high school or the grades. Undoubtedly one of the best solutions presents itself through the school newspaper. For this reason the newspaper is not only a very interesting but also a very valuable school-room enterprise. For sometime the paper has been one of the most worthwhile high school activities, but the paper for the elementary school is not so common.

Regardless of the size of the school there may be a paper. Where printing is not feasible, the paper may be neatly written and hung in the room where the children may read it, carefully noting good articles as well as errors and their corrections.

One step in advance of the mere writing of the paper is having it mimeographed and a copy made for each member of the class or school. Children really appreciate a copy of this kind enough to warrant the extra work that it requires. Of course this method is to be used where printing seems too great an undertaking to be practical. To defray the cost of stencil and paper a small fee may be charged for each paper. Two cents a copy is sufficient.

Typewritten copies for each member of a rural school are very satisfactory and helpful, particularly if upper grade pupils do the typewriting. Where one copy only can be provided, it may be read Friday afternoon, for opening exercises, or at the school program.

When the cost of the regular printing press is prohibitive one may, by using the

job printing press, have a small paper printed very cheaply. Our local printer charged us \$10.00 for 300 copies. A paper of this kind is very satisfactory for a small school. If the class is at all large, however, one issue will not contain the writings of the entire class. In such case, the teacher should see that different pupils write for the different issues.

Where one can afford to have the paper printed, a four-page newspaper, 8 1-2 x 12, three columns to the page, will prove adequate for an elementary school unless the school is very large. In that case six or eight pages might be printed. To give a specific example, we have such a paper at the Normal College Training School. The local newspaper printed the paper at the rate of \$15.00 for 300 copies or \$17.00 for 400.

By selling these papers at five cents a copy, and subscriptions at twenty cents a semester, the project becomes self-supporting without any advertising from the local merchants. In this way it cannot be said that the grade school is adding an additional burden to the community, nor can it be accused of aping the more pretentious aims of the high school. Financing this paper with no advertising, keeping it entirely dependent on subscriptions, though quite an undertaking, is nevertheless interesting; and it is this feature of our paper that is distinctive. We sell it to the training school pupils, to the Normal College students and faculty, and the townspeople. They are all very loyal to us, and we have had no trouble in disposing of our 300 copies. When the subscriptions do not pay all the expense, the class may easily,

by plays or programs, which would probably be given anyway, earn enough to pay whatever deficit may arise. During the four years' existence of our paper we have once, in co-operation with the Camp Fire Girls, given a play for such purpose.

When the cost is cared for, the problem of managing the paper with a minimum expenditure of time and energy for the teacher deserves consideration. It is usually a good plan to place the responsibility of editing the paper with one class. In the elementary school, this might easily be the 8A. To be most valuable the newspaper should be an outgrowth of the language work. In the seventh and eighth grades there are definite standards of attainment for oral and written composition, the oral preceding the written. It is from these exercises in composition that our material for publication is selected, and all articles, with the exception of news items, notices of programs, elections in student associations, or similar articles, are prepared in this way. By proceeding in this manner each issue of the paper motivates English work for one month in the Junior High Department. Children, whose papers have been selected by the staff for publication but have been crowded out, know their work will be in the next month's issue unless others in the meantime have written something more acceptable. In this way each child is in competition with his own record as well as with the other members of the class. Of course judgment must be exercised in choosing material that will be suitable for a paper which is to be published a month later.

On different occasions teachers of the lower grades have said the writing of stories for the paper had decidedly motivated the language work. The teachers all through the grades have sent in material and have expressed their interest in the project because of the pride the pupils feel in having a story in the paper. To see in print something they have written is encouraging to

children. A teacher who has all the subjects of the grade could use the paper in a similar way to motivate other subjects. In fact this is done in our department. Any thing well written in any class or subject is not only accepted but solicited, for the more co-operation, the better the result. Occasionally we get papers from other departments so well written that no corrections are necessary.

The staff should be chosen by members of the class. One may not always get the most efficient members in this way, but it is democratic, and, therefore, has its virtues. Then, too, the more the class can do for the paper, the more successful the project.

The staff may be considered a committee to make the selection of material to be published, or to afford practice to more people. Committees in the class who confer with the teacher, may be appointed from time to time.

In order to have all the grades interested in writing for the paper as well as buying it, it is necessary to have every room represented. This may be done in one of several ways. Selecting a room or class reporter is good. Having the teachers in the various grades submit several papers to the 8A committee, and letting them choose the best paper for publication, is even better, for competition stimulates interest. Occasionally it is a good plan to let the lower grades write letters to members of the 8A class telling them of certain interesting events, such as parties or programs. The class that edits the paper corrects these letters and puts them in their final form before sending them to the publishers.

To get these contributions the plan of the paper must be presented to the lower grades. Here is a splendid opportunity for purposeful language work. The entire class may prepare talks with a view to selling the paper to the lower grades. By contest, or some other means suitable to the size of the class, it may be decided who

shall make these speeches. It is surprising how willing the children are to talk, how much more enthusiastic and pointed the sentences than in the regular class exercises in oral composition, though exactly the same standards are kept. Careful thorough reasoning determines why certain pupils are selected instead of others. However, opportunities to speak to the other grades should be distributed as much as possible so that the poorer ones may talk to new audiences, thus providing a situation where those who need it most get the training.

We elect an editor-in-chief; an assistant editor; a business manager; and an editor for each of these departments: literary, news, athletics, and jokes.

In addition to sharing the duties already named for the staff, the business manager pays the bills. The checks are written in class time, the check book is balanced, and the monthly statement from the bank is placed on the bulletin board in the room where all may see it. Where one teacher has all the classes of one grade this would be a profitable and interesting exercise for the arithmetic class, but if the work is departmentalized there is no objection to taking what little time it requires from the English class. By looking after the finances

the class sees why the paper must cost something to those who get it, and that in itself is valuable for we are all prone to appreciate most that for which we pay something.

The business manager districts the town and assigns certain streets to certain pupils who sell there but in no other place. The children are instructed to give every business man a chance to buy, but not to worry him unnecessarily. Certain rooms are assigned to certain 8A pupils who sell papers to those rooms, and in co-operation with the teacher, collect the nickels.

The school paper is eagerly watched for. Frequently a small boy meets me on the street and inquires when the next paper is coming out or whether he may write for it.

Through the paper, the pupils see the application of rules learned in the class room. It requires a knowledge of the fundamental principles taught in elementary school English to write a newspaper article, though it does not require special talent. By no means do I claim that the newspaper solves all the problems of the English teacher, but I do know from experience that it motivates the work from the 3A grade through the 8A, and for that reason is a worthwhile school project.

CHILDREN'S POETRY

(Continued from Page 289)

numerous in the opinions of experts in the field of children's reading as in present practice as indicated by courses of study and textbooks.

It may be some of the poems children like are not the so-called "best literature"; perhaps they do not need to be, as the idea

of "best literature" may be conventional and traditional and not genuine. It becomes clear that if we wish to lead children to an appreciation of literature and help them to find enjoyment in it, it must be through materials suited to their taste and understanding.

MY SIXTH GRADE CLASS

An Attempt to Arouse the Creative Impulse

PEARL J. GREENBURG

Linden, New Jersey

MY CLASS and I live on the top floor of our school. We occupy the southwest corner, and we are never forsaken by the sun. Perhaps that accounts for the happy atmosphere of our room. We sit at little desks, arranged in groups, or bunches as the children sometimes call them. And (heresy upon heresy) we sit with our best friends—to make talking the easier! Yet if you should happen to come in some day you would probably find the children too busy to take undue advantage of the opportunity for idle talking. Looking over Sarah's shoulder you would very likely find her rewriting a poem. You might see Dorothea and Jean puzzling out words from a French book, and Claire writing music phrases on the board for the others to recognize. Raymond and Charles would very likely be poring over a huge poster, and calling out loud for me to come and look at their progress.

"What a gifted class," I can hear you say. "What unusual children." You are wrong. They are not unusual. They are average children from average homes, but they are children set free.

It is of how I came to set free the desire for expression that I believe to lie dormant in very many children, and of how that desire expressed itself in writing poetry that I want to tell.

When these children came to me they were much as other children. On the whole the class is somewhat brighter than other classes—that is, it has a slightly higher intelligence quotient. But the nerve fiber is the same. They are of the same stuff

as the rest of the children in the school. They come of the same average homes and average parentage.

These children had never written poetry before. I believe they write poetry now because I wanted them to do so, and because they were stimulated to do so. All of us engaged in teaching know that the achievement of a child is limited by his own native endowment. All the stimulation in the world could not make any child express what is not innate within its own psychic make up. But not all of us engaged in teaching seem to realize that children possess a gift for expression—in one form or another—that is but very seldom encouraged out of its inner life.

You will want to know how I—a rank and file teacher in an ordinary city school—so stimulate my class of thirty-five children that they write and rewrite with enthusiasm and love, and sometimes achieve poetic beauty. You will want to know what method, what technique I used. And that is just what is difficult to explain. For I haven't any method. Instead let me show you my room.

The thing I have tried to do is to create a sensitive atmosphere. The room looks like other rooms, but it feels different. I had a young teacher in training who spent her first two or three days in observation. When I asked her what she thought of our class she said, "Why . . . I don't know. It's so free . . . so different, I—don't know what I think of it, but I love it."

In the first place we have books, many, many books. The shelves of two large

cases are filled with volumes of poetry, folk tales, travel tales—every sort of book. The children are constantly bringing books till they fairly tumble all over the place. The head of the children's department at the Trenton Public Library said to me several months ago, "I can always tell your children from the others." And when I wanted to know how she answered, "By the books they ask for, and their eagerness." I do feel that that statement gives the clue to the method, if method there must be. So far as I can, I try to liberate the eagerness already within so many children.

It has been my experience that music will stimulate the desire to write. Sometimes when the children come into the room they find me at the piano playing. Always they gather around. Certain ones? Surely. But sometimes another, unexpected, one comes. Once after hearing MacDowell's "To a Water Lily" a little girl said, "I see pictures when you play that," and she told her picture. She was in my opinion, awakening to a desire for expression. Writing poetry is but a step further, and the child wrote this:

SLEEP

Sleep, Sleep,
Please do not weep,
For I will sing you a song
All the night long.
Sing, song,
All the night long.
Sleep, my pretty one, sleep,
While thy father watches his sheep
When he comes home
In Fairyland you will roam,
My Dearie.

Drawing, too, is another means of expressing the creative spirit. This particular class has spent several months making excellent linoleum cuts. Now the interest has flowed on into a study of manuscript writing. The story of how this

happened would take another article to tell.

But how does all that lead to creative writing? First, I say, establish a stimulating and sensitive atmosphere. Encourage the children to become enthusiastic about everything that seems worthy. We have talked so much about the beauty in the world that these children come with books, and pictures, and souvenirs from other countries and, what we are primarily interested in, their own work.

I never asked this class to write poems. It all began (after I had almost given up hope of its ever beginning) with a little boy saying, "Don't you think we could write some poems like those you have been reading?" It was during Book Week, and I was giving literature a little more than its allotted time. I had been reading from Rose Fyleman, and Hilda Conklin, and A. A. Milne. The class at the time was sitting close around me. I looked up and saw this boy's eyes, round and shining. In just a moment a little girl said—almost sighed—"Oh . . . let's".

From that day to this, those children have brought me their offerings. Don't think that they are never inopportune. They wouldn't be children if they did not sometimes bring up their poems just in the middle of my adding a long column of figures. Don't think that it is always easy to find words of encouragement for the funny things they call poems. But I believe that the secret of promoting continued effort is encouragement. After a while even those who were shy at first become eager to write. I recall the instance of one very reserved boy. This child had been so reserved at first that it hurt. He was wound so tight that I despaired of ever getting close to him. For several months he never spoke to me, except when it was necessary. Then one day he was alone in the room with me, the other children being in the gymnasium. I gave him some charts to make, and he drew a few

lines. Then he said, "Did you give me this to do just to keep me busy?" I hesitated a minute and asked another question in answer. "Why, do you have something you want to do?"

"Yes," he said. "I have something to write." After a half hour he brought me this.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

When the old year goes limping out,
And the New Year comes flying in,
I think back to the years gone by,
When people did not know what a
New Year's was.
Hark! I hear a bell ringing softly to me.
It is ringing the old year out, and the
New Year in.

Ding Ding

Ding Dong.

About a month later he wrote this one that he calls "Snowflakes." Do you not feel in the second stanza especially, a wistfulness that is strangely mature?

SNOWFLAKES

Come! Little snowflakes, Come!
So flakey and so white,
Come down to this pretty world below.
Little Snowflakes, your life must be short
But yet while you are in the air
You take your time—Dancing, Dancing,
Come! Little snowflakes, Come!

It is quite natural that the life we lead and the things we talk about become sources of their inspiration. The children write mostly of fairies and of the outdoor world, sometimes all unconsciously weaving into the fabric of the poem, the stuff of their own dreams. For example, the children in our class consider Edward Hoffman a "regular" fellow. He can think of more mischief in a minute than some boys can in a month. Yet he brought me this little poem, all smiles and eager shining eyes. I think you will recognize that he wanted to write a poem.

As I was going to bed last night
I looked and saw in the candle light

A little fairy flying there.
She had very very golden hair.
She held a wand in her hand,—
It was of gold and of blue;
But when she saw me—
Out the window she flew!

One little girl wrote this poem without any effort.

MOTHER MOON

Mother Moon in the sky
High! High—Oh so high!
Why do you not some day,
Come down with us children,
To play?

If you knew Helen Berkowitz with her intense personality and her strangely calm philosophy you would understand why she wrote this:

I should like to rise and go
Where the big red apples grow,
And eat them, one by one,
Until they're nearly done.

There were many many more. Not one of them, I am fully aware, is in the strictest sense "poetry". Not one of these, probably, is really unusual. But the writing of each one has given pleasure to its author. Thus have the gates of repression that dam up children's inner life—creative life—been broken down, and the innate creative urge been set free.

I should like to add one prose piece, which in my opinion is so lovely in style (for a sixth grade boy) that it approaches the poetical. It was done at the time that Tony Sarg's puppet show was in our town. None of us saw the show. There were various reasons. So we contented ourselves with talking about it. We had heard that Mr. Sarg departed from Mr. Browning's version of the Pied Piper, and he had the children return to Hamlin Town. Then Charles Farrington, the author of the little story, said he believed that they should return. Some hours later he gave

me this to read. I present it exactly as he gave it. Not anything has been altered.

THE RETURN OF THE CHILDREN TO HAMLIN TOWN

In the Pied Piper's land all was gay. The sun was shining bright. The trees bowed to the breeze. Under one big apple tree there was a swing. There were boys and girls taking turns, each getting one hundred swings.

There was a large building in back of the tree. This was where the boys and girls slept and ate. They had enough to eat, they slept enough, they were all happy.

One boy didn't like to swing, he didn't like to play any games. He liked to take walks by himself. He had always wished to get a look at the Piper's pipe. After he got a good look he went home.

He had a piece of tin in his pocket. He took it out and started to fashion a pipe like the Piper's. Every day he visited the Piper's house and looked at his pipe.

After two weeks he had the pipe made.

"Now to learn how to blow it." He said "I will go to the Piper's house and see if he is practicing on his horn."

Sure enough the Piper was practicing. The boy listened. Every day he listened and went home and practiced.

At last the boy knew how to blow it. He told the other boys and girls about it. That night they went to the mountain side. The

boy blew the horn, and the secret door opened. They slept on the other mountainside that night.

When morning came they got up and went home. They arrived in the town early in the morning. The first one to see them was the little lame boy. At first he thought he was dreaming. He pinched himself but he was awake.

When the people saw them they cried for joy. Each mother sought her child. They hugged and kissed and cried. The mayor and the counsellors danced for joy. The sun rose up smiling, the birds began to sing, and all the domestic animals scampered around. Every body was happy.

There was a feast in the mayor's house that night. Every body was invited, even the children.

HAVE I made you feel that these children want to write? They do want to write, and out of that desire have come these expressions. They are but childish expressions, of course, but the child who has fashioned verses and who has come sometimes with radiant face to wait for your approval, or at other times with timidity born of the fear all artists know, is certainly drawing close to a real appreciation of what he sees in the world. Something must have been awakened within him that slept before.

LANGUAGE VERSUS SILENT READING

(Continued from Page 291)

fix it in mind. The time limit may be fixed to include this process, but it should never include the writing of the answers.

I have stressed only one problem which arises relative to the work in reading and

language. There are others which warrant equally careful thought. It is invariably necessary to consider the value of one subject in relation to the other in order that neither will be sacrificed.

EDITORIALS

The Good of All Concerned

THE DISCUSSION of elementary school newspapers by Miss Albertson, in her article, "The Newspaper in the Elementary School," page 297, is quite practical. One finds on reading the article that a variety of plans may be followed in developing a newspaper, and that costs need not exceed the means of the pupils.

The suggestion is made that the pupils should be allowed to elect their own editors, even though this may often lead to results of a less satisfactory nature. This, however, should not be true in all stages of the development of the paper. The privilege of electing editors may at the outset be given along with judicious advice by the teacher. In fact, it may be well for the teacher to make initial appointments, in order that the newspaper may have the right start.

There are many ways in which the pupils may be guided subsequently in the election of editors. For example, the teacher may make nominations, and the pupils may vote upon them, or the teacher may prepare an eligibility list from which nominations may be made by the pupil. Still another possibility is for the teacher to guide the pupils in outlining qualifications for each staff position. Nominations might then be made by the pupils to accord with these qualifications. Finally, as the pupils gain in a sense of responsibility and in editorial experience, and as group pride in the publication increases, the privilege of making nominations for the editorial staff may be granted with only slight supervision.

Another problem that will arise in the election of staff workers is that of the right distribution of offices among the pupils in the group. Here, the problem is not merely that of finding the pupils best quali-

fied to do excellent editing, but of developing the ability and skill of pupils who are not, at the outset, prepared to accomplish as much as the pupils more gifted. These pupils have the right to expect a sufficient share in the work of publication to give them opportunities for training.

There must be no confusion, however, at any time, relative to the order in which these two problems are taken up. Standards of excellence must in some measure be established before any attempt is made to place on the staff the pupils of less ability.

Appreciation Again

THE REPORT on "The Reading Interests of Boys," presented by Miss Danylu Belser, page 292, furnishes an excellent survey of a number of studies in children's reading. The report, however, does not include several investigations of recent date, which should afford the committee new data for study. The findings of these new investigators reveal many vital facts concerning children's interests in reading. With these facts before the committee, further comparisons might be made between the reading of boys in the United States and that of boys in Europe.

According to standards established by early investigators, the committee states that "before a boy finishes high school in Europe he has made acquaintance of all the classics and the principal modern writers of both prose and poetry . . . and in the main he has acquired an appreciation of and a love for good literature." This statement is preceded by the comment that European children do not do as much outside reading as they do in this country, and that the source of material in Europe is the teacher. It seems

further that "reading in leisure time is considered more a luxury in Europe than in America," and that "the reading of European children is decidedly more directed than is that of American children."

It is exceedingly difficult to reconcile these comments, all of which show an emphasis upon adult control of children's reading, with the conclusion that the European boy, through these severely hampering methods, yet acquires "an appreciation of and a love for good literature."

The question is: can America, following the line of recent investigations, which favor a sympathetic understanding of children's real interests in books, and abundant opportunity for reading in leisure,

reach by so divergent a course the achievement claimed for European boys—"an appreciation of and a love for good literature." Is it not possible that a careful investigation of the actual reading preferences of European boys might reveal tastes less highly developed than has been assumed? It may be that these boys have been trained to talk and write appreciatively about books for which they have little genuine liking. May it not be true that a finer culture may ultimately result in America from a sympathetic development of the normal reading interests of boys and girls rather than from a super-imposed culture which does not allow for the development of normal interests?

Welcome be ye, good New Year,
Welcome Twelfth Day, both *in fere*
Welcome saints, loved and dear,
Welcome Yule!

Welcome be ye, Candlemas,
Welcome be ye, Queen of Bliss,
Welcome both to more and less,
Welcome Yule!

Welcome be ye that are here,
Welcome all, and make good cheer,
Welcome all, another year,
Welcome Yule!

—Old Carol.

REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS

PRESTER JOHN. By John Buchan. New York, George Doran and Co. c1910.

Boys who like stories of adventure—that is to say every boy alive—will find enjoyment in *Prester John*, by John Buchan. It is a story of a native rising in South Africa, plentifully interspersed with hidden treasure, ancient religious rites, illicit diamond trading, and hair's-breadth escapes. The story has the added interest of a strange setting, for very few novels have been written about South Africa.

Readers are fortunate to have this story in an edition illustrated by Henry Pitz. There are a few typographical errors, which one regrets in an edition so excellent otherwise. A glossary would, I believe, increase the enjoyment which the book affords, for the story abounds in Boer and native words and place names.—J. M.

THE POETRY BOOK: Volumes I to IX. By Miriam Blanton Huber, Herbert B. Bruner, and Charles Madison Curry. Rand McNally and Company, 1926.

The Poetry Book embodies the results of an experiment with thirty courses of study, and a large number of poems. A description of the investigation appears in the *Elementary English Review* for October and November, 1926.

In this series, materials are arranged for use in each grade of the elementary and junior high schools. The tenth volume of the series, entitled "Children's Interests in Poetry" gives in detail the technique of experimentation and a complete account of the results.—M. H.

S. P. E. TRACT No. XXIII. ENGLISH HAND-WRITING. With Thirty-four Facsimile Plates, and Artistic and Paleographical Criticisms by Roger Fry and E. A. Lowe. The Clarendon Press, 1926.

It is perhaps regrettable that the reviewer cannot discuss this book from the professional standpoint of a teacher of penmanship. The fact that a layman finds the book interesting and stimulating may have some significance, however.

Here, handwriting is treated as an art. There are a number of facsimile plates showing hand-

writing of various types, and these are accompanied by criticisms. The comments are soundly sensible: distinctness and speed are continually desired even before beauty and distinction.

The book ought to leaven the whole lump of dull penmanship lessons and practice exercises.—J. M.

THIS SINGING WORLD FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN. By Louis Untermeyer. New York, Harcourt Brace, and Co. c1926.

It is said that a librarian gets the keenest pleasure from a bibliography of bibliographies. This being the case, some compiler will one day make an anthology of anthologies, and paste a gold star on the calendar to mark the peak of his achievement. Then, perhaps, we shall have fewer and better anthologies.

We have with us a new edition of "This Singing World," this time entitled, "This Singing World for Younger Children." It is brought together by Louis Untermeyer, and will afford pleasure to a great many persons, but not, I think, to "younger children."

Mr. Untermeyer's notes impress one as being pseudo-juvenile. Much of the poetry in this book is mature, and the majority of it will be enjoyed most by those who have attained high school age. There is Padraic Colum's "Interior," "Requiem" by Stevenson, "Apes and Ivory," by Noyes, and "The Blessed Damozel." On the other hand, high school children may be offended by the inclusion of certain verses which they would inevitably characterize as "baby-poems"—poems which despite this appellation, younger children have not been known to enjoy over-much.

It is a delightful collection but one for adults.—D. B.

THE LAST DAYS OF POMPEII. By Bulwer-Lytton. Illustrated by F. C. Yohn. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926.

A new edition of *The Last Days of Pompeii*, illustrated in colors by F. C. Yohn, is so attractive that it makes one wish for other classics in such a form.

The typography is pleasing, and the volume is as suitable for a gift as for the library shelves.—D. B.

AMONG THE PUBLISHERS

Alcott, Louisa M. *An Old Fashioned Girl*. With illustrations by Elenore Abbott. Little, Brown, 1926.

Ashton, Mina Pearl. *Story-Book Tales*. Illustrated by Ludwig and Regina. Beckley-Cardy.

Benet, William Rose. *The Flying King of Kurio*. Illustrated by Janet Smalley. Doran.

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Blakeney, E. H., Compiler. *Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers*. Everyman Library, E. P. Dutton.

Buxton, Sir Thomas Fowell. *Memoirs*. Everyman's Library, E. P. Dutton.

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Cowper, William. *Letters, Selected and Annotated by William Hadley*. Everyman's Library. E. P. Dutton.

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Dodge, Mary Mapes. *Hans Brinker, or the Silver Skates*. Illustrated by George Wharton Edwards. Scribner's.

Galsworthy, John, and others. *The Treasure Ship*. Illustrated. Scribner's.

Harker, L. Allen. *Hilda Ware*. Henry Holt, 1926.

Hawkes, Clarence. *Jungle Joe, Pride of the Circus*. Illustrated by L. J. Bridgman. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard, 1926.

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Lefevre, Felicite. *Soldier Boy*. Illustrated by Tony Sarg. Greenberg, 1926.

MacDonald, George. *The Light Princess*. Illustrated by Dorothy P. Lathrop. Macmillan, 1926.

Moon, Grace. *Chi-wee and Loki*. Illustrated by Carl Moon. Doubleday, Page, 1926.

Moses, Montrose J. *Another Treasury of Plays*

for Children. With illustrations by Tony Sarg. Little, Brown, 1926.

Nash, Harriet A. *Polly's Secret*. With illustrations by Hattie Longstreet Price. Little, Brown, 1926.

Olcott, Frances Jenkins. *Wonder Tales from Windmill Lands*. Illustrated by Herman Rosse. Longmans, Green, 1926.

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Rawson, Kenneth. *A Boy's Eye View of the Arctic*. Illustrated with photographs. Macmillan.

S. P. E. Tract No. XXIII. *English Handwriting with Thirty-Four Facsimile Plates*. Oxford University Press.

S. P. E. Tract No. XXIV. *Jespersion, Otto. Notes on Relative Clauses*. Scott, Fred Newton. American Slang. Oxford University Press.

Sample, Anna Eliza. *My Cut-a-Picture Book*. With illustrations from original freehand cuttings by the author. Silver, Burdett.

Sheridan, Bernard; Kleiser, Clare; and Mathews, Anna I. *Speaking and Writing English: Book Four*. Sanborn, 1926.

Taylor, Frances Lillian. *Adventures in Storyland*. Illustrated by Clara Atwood Fitts. Beckley-Cardy Co.

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Yonge, C. M., *The Chaplet of Pearls*. Illustrated. L. C. Page and Co.

Verne, Jules. *Five Weeks in a Balloon, and Around the World in Eighty Days*. Everyman's Library. E. P. Dutton.

Voltaire. *The Age of Louis XIV*. Translated by Martin P. Pollock. Everyman's Library. E. P. Dutton.

Walpole, Horace. *Letters*. Selected and Arranged by William Hadley. Everyman's Library. E. P. Dutton.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY
THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912

Of The Elementary English Review published monthly except July and August at Detroit, Michigan for October 1, 1926.

State of Michigan }
County of Wayne } ss.

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared *Anna C. Fowler*, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that she is the *Business Manager of The Elementary English Review* and that the following is, to the best of her knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, *C. C. Certain, Detroit, Michigan*; Editor, *C. C. Certain, Detroit, Michigan*; Business Manager, *Anna C. Fowler, Detroit, Michigan*.

2. That the owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given.) *C. C. Certain, 6505 Grand River Avenue, Detroit, Michigan*.

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ANNA C. FOWLER,
Business Manager.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 5th day of October, 1926.
(SEAL)

HARRY W. FOWLER,
(My commission expires January 19, 1930.)